



NATIONAL HISPANIC COUNCIL ON AGING

Yanira Cruz - President & CEO

*Working to improve
the lives of Hispanic
older adults and
their families*

April 8, 2009

Ms. Anna Gomez

Deputy Assistant Secretary

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

1401 Constitution Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20230

Dear Deputy Assistant Secretary Gomez:

The National Hispanic Council on Aging was founded in 1979 with the mission to improve the lives of Hispanic older adults, their families and communities. NHCOA focuses its efforts on Hispanic families as a whole, recognizing that Hispanic older adults' quality of life is inextricably linked to that of their spouses, children, and grandchildren. On behalf of our members, we are excited to have the opportunity to offer guidance to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) as you consider the best means to allocate \$4.7 billion of funds in the stimulus package for broadband deployment.

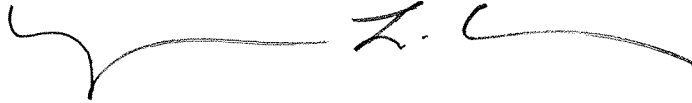
One of the most important issues to all seniors is healthcare. Broadband will make possible an interoperable system of electronic healthcare records and remote monitoring tools that will drive down costs and result in fewer mistakes during treatment. Seniors unable to travel will benefit from innovations like telemedicine, interacting with healthcare professionals in real time without having to leave home. This is especially important for seniors living in rural and underserved communities.

Seniors want to be self-sufficient. Advanced internet applications provide for independent living options, such as new adaptive tools for the disabled, increased education opportunities, and even new employment and at-home business opportunities. Today's seniors don't want age or ability to become a hindrance to a life full of ambition and enjoyment, and technology helps make that possible.

The best way for the NTIA to succeed in its goal of building broadband networks to everyone is by relying on state and local leadership to help guide the process, involving private sector expertise when possible, giving interested parties the chance to comment and making the entire course of action transparent and accountable. Furthermore, it is critical that the disbursement of these funds not be encumbered by unnecessary conditions that could discourage participation by some of the most capable providers.

This is an exciting time to be an advocate for seniors, and we have faith in the NTIA's ability to carry out this broadband deployment in a way that will maximize the benefit to seniors across the country. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can help facilitate this program.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Y. Cruz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Yanira Cruz, MPH, DrPH
President & CEO